

Eating Disorders



All you need to know



What is an Eating Disorder?

According to the NHS

An eating disorder is a mental health condition where you use the control of food to cope with difficult feelings and situations.

This can include:

Limiting the amount of food eaten

Eating very large quantities of food at once

Getting rid of food eaten through unhealthy means (e.g. making yourself sick, misusing laxatives, fasting, or excessive exercise)

Or a combination of these behaviours

If you're worried you have an ED, please speak to your GP to get the support you deserve

What causes an Eating Disorder?

- **'Ideal' images from society and the media**
- **Prejudice about people who are overweight**
- **Low self-esteem and lack of confidence**
- **Perfectionism and unrealistic expectations**
- **Controlling stress, change or difficult feelings**
- **Trauma**
- **Family expectations and attitudes to each other**

Types of Eating Disorders

Anorexia

Restrict your eating which can result in binge eating, vomiting and excess exercise. Fear of gaining any lost weight back.

Bulimia

You would find yourself overeating often, but then having a lot of attempts to lose weight by making unhealthy means

Binge eating disorder

Eating large amounts of food despite not being hungry anymore

Eating disorders not otherwise specified

Some people may have considerable difficulties with eating which doesn't match any of the types of ED. This is often called "Eating Disorders Not Otherwise Specified"

How it can affect you

Body

Dry skin

**Thinning/brittle hair and
nails**

Tooth decay

**Face and body are bloated
or swollen**

Irregular or loss of periods



Mental Health

Depression

Mood swings

Anxiety

Low self-esteem

Poor concentration & memory

Increased tiredness

Sleep problems



Eating Disorders Myths



Myth: ED is a choice
EDs are mental health disorders and are never a personal choice

Myth: Someone must be underweight to have an ED
Most people with an ED stay at an apparently “healthy” weight or are “overweight”.

Myth: People can't recover from the illness - it's in their genes
Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible with the right help and support.

Myth: Eating disorders are a diet that has gone wrong
EDs are serious mental health disorders.

Myth: EDs are someone being vain and seeking attention
EDs are serious diagnosable illnesses; they are not a lifestyle choice, a phase, or someone being attention seeking.

Overcoming an Eating Disorder

**Make a list of reasons to stay the same
and reasons to change**

Reasons to stay the same	Reasons to change
.....
.....
.....
.....

I want to change, what steps do I take next?

**Start by talking to your GP
You might get referred to therapy,
which will help you understand your ED
and recover**

Useful Organisations

Aston University Counselling and Mental Wellbeing Service

Tel: 0121 204 4007

Email: counselling@aston.ac.uk

B-EAT

Helpline: 0345 634 1414 (over 18)

Youthline: 0345 634 7650 (under 25)

Youthline: 0345 634 7650 (under 25)

Email: help@b-eat.co.uk

NIWE Eating Distress Service

Helpline: 0191 221 0233

Email: enquiries@niwe.org.uk

Forward thinking Birmingham

Tel: 0300 300 0099